



JAN H. GARDNER
Frederick County
Executive

SB 563

Local Health Departments
– Funding

County Position: SUPPORT

Date: February 17, 2021
Committee: Budget & Taxation

Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner urges your **SUPPORT** for Senate Bill – 563 – Local Health Departments – Funding.

Maryland’s Local Health Departments (LHDs) have mounted an exceptional response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. LHDs continue to provide front-line services – testing, contact tracing, and vaccinations – and play a significant role in education, guidance, and enforcement of State and local health requirements and directives. Adequate funding and flexibility is necessary to ensure the continued strength of our public health system and its ability to respond to immediate crises as well as fulfill essential functions.

County Executive Gardner supports the provisions in the proposed legislation that:

- Strengthens funding for Local Health Departments, acknowledging their vital role in the delivery of services and protection of public health in an increasingly complex landscape that requires response to a wide variety of issues and concerns;
- Specifies allowable uses for this funding to include expenses related to equipment necessary to respond to the pandemic, such as personal protective equipment, as well as expenses related to data management and information sharing;
- Requires an evaluation and assessment of the technology, communications, and information services used by Local Health Departments, which is essential to ensuring adequate modernization of our public health infrastructure; and
- Ensures the funding and flexibility that will enable local health departments to continue the fight against COVID-19 and, in the process, position Local Health Departments to meet future challenges.

Frederick County Executive Gardner urges a **FAVORABLE** report for Senate Bill 563.

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